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It's impossible for me to talk about the "typical" bracero because there is no one type. There are several types. There's the fellow from Oaxaca. He's more or less a peasant. He comes in wearing huaraches, and a shirt and pants, and a wide hat, and that's it. That's all he brings with him. He is apt to be very timid. You won't him to talk much.

Then there's the fellow from Guadalajara, and the region around there. He is just the opposite. He's always willing to joke with you. He's very friendly, and will help you out if you ask him to.

Then there's the guy from right here at the border -- Mexicali. They are pretty wise. They know all the answers. They often go down to Empalme and give an address in the interior somewhere, and get contracted that way. You may have trouble interviewing them because they aren't on the level.

Then there are all different kinds. I remember one time I got talking with a fellow at the Reception Center and he told me he had been in the war as a pilot and had flown with a squadron that went over to Guam and the Philippines and all around there. I didn't believe him, but he pulled out his identification and showed me. When he got out, he had been a policeman in Mexico City, but had been busted for one reason or another. So here he was, trying to make a living.

Gosh, I remember one time seeing midgets -- dwarfs -- get contracted right here. One was about three feet high. He wasn't deformed. Perfectly proportioned. He got contracted right away. The other was about three feet high, too. He wasn't built quite right, but he was strong. You could see that. So he got contracted right away too. Then we had a sailor from Veracruz who was over six feet tall come through. So it takes all kinds.

My personal opinion of the program? Well, it is a problem around here, particularly at the present time. There are lots of people who have lived here for years, and have worked in agriculture all their lives. But the braceros have taken their jobs. I know what the International Agreement and all that says about locals having first choice. The thing is, locals don't want to work for seventy cents an hour. Braceros are happy to work for that. They come into Penney's to have their checks cashed. They run \$15, \$20, \$30, maybe even more if they are lucky. They are always happy. They never complain about the pay. Of course, right now they've got it rough, because of all the rain. They aren't able to put in the hours.

The growers may claim that locals aren't willing to work because they don't want to do stoop labor. That isn't true. If the growers offered \$1.00 an hour, they could get all the locals they could ever use. And they could afford to pay \$1.00

if they wanted to. This is known as a rich man's valley, and the rich men are all growers.

I know darn well local boys are willing to work in the fields and I'll give you an example. There's a fellow here in town. I know him pretty well. He has got together a crew of lettuce cutters. They have been together a long time. They are really good. Highly skilled, you know. They are able to demand good pay from the growers and get it, because the growers know they are worth it. It got so a grower over the line in Baja California hired them, they were so good. Sort of a bracer program in reverse.'

Naturally, the local boys are not too happy about seeing all the jobs taken, and wages lowered. And another thing, many of these braceros marry local girls. It is just because that way they can come back in as immigrants. Oh, there are hard feelings. There have been lots of fights. You may have heard of the time in 1954 when the Mexican Government backed out of the deal, and the U.S. Government was taking anybody who crossed the border. Men were jumping over the fence like crazy. Things were really rough then. The local boys formed their own border patrol, you might say. They patrolled the streets of Calexico, and when they caught a bracero on his way up to El Centro to the Reception Center, they'd beat him up. That went on for some time before it blew over.

The men who I talk to usually have only one thing they complain about. That's food. They just can't get used to our American food. ~~xx~~ It makes them sick, so they just don't eat it many times. They come down here from where their camps are, and stock up on Mexican groceries, or go to a Mexican restaurant and eat all they can hold. They come down by droves on Saturday evening, and rent a hotel room, and go back to camp Monday morning. Usually with a big bag full of food. And cigarettes. They don't like our American cigarettes.

For recreation-- well, there are plenty of girls in Mexicali. They met them at dance halls and so forth. Some of the men spend all their money in bars or gambling. I see them on their way back, all shot. They say, "Well, I lost every cent I had." Or they may be rolled. Many of them lose their money this way.

*case of malarial who tried to control
shivering. Denied he was had it - and with reason
He was shivered back.*